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ABSTRACT

In British Columbia the responsibility for non-degree, continuing professional education of teachers is vested in the Ministry of Education, three universities, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, and the schools. Demography necessitates coordinated planning. Multi-agency planning committees are established to improve communication, assess needs, avoid duplication, clarify goals and roles, share resources, and facilitate evaluation. This collaboration requires the sharing of power, planning, organizing, operating, evaluating, and committing resources. Examples are given of four planning committees functioning in different geographic areas of the Province. The examples describe the purpose which stimulated the collaboration, the participating agencies, their interactions, and the functions of the multi-agency committee. A description is given of two programs designed for teachers by cooperative planning committees: Teaching Effectiveness and Classroom Handling (TEACH), and Professional Refinements in Developing Effectiveness (PRIDE). (JD)

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MULTI-AGENCY PLANNING FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION OF TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION

Adult education and economic realities have coalesced to stress the wisdom of and the necessity for cooperative planning in the 1980s. Andrews (1974) stated:

> Underlying the concept of collaboration is a value belief that decisions about teacher education [or any other professional system] . . . can no longer rest with any single agency - parties affected by a system must be involved in the policy decisions affecting that system (p. 8).

Ewert (1982) stated:

> participation [in planning] results in greater perceived relevance of the educational content, a more favorable attitude toward learning, a stronger commitment to the program, and a greater likelihood that an individual's learning objectives will be met (p. 30).

Edelfelt (1977) pointed out the value of including participants in the cooperative planning of in-service activities. Brady and Long (1972) cautioned that there is little experimental data on which to base decisions regarding specific planning models.

This paper outlines a conceptual framework and provides practical examples of multi-agency planning models for the continuing professional education of teachers. The planning models do not prescribe any specific outcomes, in-service activities or delivery strategy. Orlich (1982) pointed out that in-service models and delivery strategies are independent. He further suggested that the AAIM (Orlich, 1979), Organization Development (Runkel, Wyant, Bell and Runkel, 1980), Development (Knowles, 1980a), School Based (Henderson, 1979) and Advocacy (Gray and Myers, 1978) in-service models explicitly assume cooperative planning although not necessarily multi-agency collaboration.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Continuing professional education is influenced by many factors. Continuing professional education of medical doctors in Nova Scotia differs drastically from continuing professional education of teachers in British Columbia. The locus of control, geography, distribution of the practitioners, change rate of knowledge, risk of practicing and identified needs involved in these two professional situations illustrate a significant set of variables to consider when planning continuing professional education.

Definition and Scope

Houle (1970) suggested that professions are specified occupations that cluster around a body of knowledge, operate under an ethical code, control entrance and are self-regulating. Furthermore, professions:

> . . . have come to the realization that their members must individually and collectively accept the obligation to continue to learn and that programs to achieve this purpose must be established. The [three] reasons for the necessity . . .: the flood of new knowledge constantly makes existing theory and practice obsolete; as the occupant of a highly privileged and protected role, the professional feels a sense of obligation to his clients and to society to keep his service at the highest possible level; and the awareness of a rising tide of antagonism spurs many professionals to defend themselves by increasing their separate and collective competence (p. 3).

Continuing professional education programs that encourage professionals to maintain their effectiveness within changing knowledge domain, client demands, social acceptance and societal priorities are required for the future. Houle (1980) suggested that such programs could focus on:

1. mastery of the fundamental and complex bodies of knowledge and theory,
2. application of knowledge and theory to specific problems and concerns,

3. documentation of the practical state-of-the-art,
4. assurance of minimum standards of practice,
5. assessment of professional practice,
6. advancement and protection of the profession and practitioner,
7. establishment of legal recognition, special rights and privileges of the profession,
8. awareness of the general public,
9. establishment of ethical practice,
10. establishment of professional enforcement procedures,
11. establishment of formal relationships between the profession, practitioner and client,
12. establishment of formal relationships between the profession and allied groups, and
13. development of specialty groups of allied professionals.

Critical Factors

Continuing professional education of teachers is carried out in an uncertain social milieu, unique demographic conditions and changing knowledge base, but also within a professional structure with a diffuse locus of control for continuing professional education and pre-service programs, certification policies and staffing practices that accentuate the needs for in-service.

Pre-service, Certification and Staffing. Most secondary teacher education programs have a content specialty focus, although certification policies certify practitioners as generalists. Staff reductions, small schools and unexpected changes in school population force administrators to assign teachers to positions which may not reflect their pre-service education. Economic

restraints will likely increase the percentage of inappropriately-assigned teachers and thus increase the need for and variety of in-service activities.

Locus of Control. In British Columbia the responsibility for non-degree, continuing, professional education of teachers is vested in the Ministry of Education (Implementation Branch and Field Superintendent's Office), the profession (British Columbia Teachers' Federation and various provincial specialist associations), the universities (Simon Fraser University, the University of British of Columbia and University of Victoria) and the schools (district office and local schools).

Each agency in the locus of control has unique attributes which distance them from each other. The Ministry, a public bureaucracy, is "influenced by and responsive to the political system" and has power, money, legal responsibility and little professional credibility (Smith, 1975, p. 34). Recently professional organizations have assumed the union stance, emphasizing members' welfare and at times have de-emphasized professional growth. Universities have "unique traditions, mores and ways of working borrowed from early concepts of a community of autonomous scholars. . . . [Traditionally] faculties rule in a climate of academic freedom...so strong" that multi-agency planning is not mentioned much less applied (Smith, 1975, p. 34). Public schools are organized using "corporate-business model conjoined with public bureaucracy approach to functioning. 'Line-and-staff' procedure and behavior are the working ways of life . . . which [does not promote] the free collaborative model" (Smith, 1974, p. 34). The idiosyncratic natures of the four foci are further complicated by the presence of a recently-developed delivery system: Knowledge Network of the West (KNOW). It is apparent that effective continuing professional education programming must unify these diverse agencies.

Recent changes in public school curricula add to the discrepancy between current practice and desired performance. Decreases in available funding to facilitate increased needs for continued professional education necessitates that "every effort should be made to develop a cooperative model that unifies the different authorities, pools resources and capitalizes on effective delivery modes" (Yore and Sheppy, 1983, p. 6).

Multi-Agency Planning Committees

Planning effective continuing professional education programs must focus on the needs, wants and willingness of the audience. Cooperative participatory planning is necessary to surface, assess and fulfill these factors (Knowles, 1980; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Lauffer, 1978; Boone, Dolan and Shearon, 1971). Multi-agency planning committees should attempt to:

1. improve communication,
2. assess needs,
3. avoid duplication,
4. clarify goals and roles,
5. share resources, and
6. facilitate evaluation.

Continuing professional education that achieves these goals will provide and deliver educational experiences that independent, uncoordinated efforts would not be able to do because of lack of authority, money, human resources and planning.

Collaboration requires the sharing of power, planning, organizing, operating, evaluating and committing resources (Allen, 1974). Collaboration is only possible in a working relationship in which individuals mutually respect one

Demography. Demography further necessitates the need for a coordinated effort. Three of the foci in the locus of control, the Ministry of Education, universities and British Columbia Teachers' Federation, are located in Victoria and Vancouver. The 100-kilometre-wide cluster of foci physically distances them from a large part of British Columbia. The geography and population distribution require effective use of local resources to provide and facilitate on-site activities or distance education strategies to deliver province-wide continuing professional education activities.

Program Objectives. The needs of teachers are varied, ranging from the need for current content information, boost in morale, broadened awareness and curricula overviews to significant behavior changes. Strother (1983) stated ". . . that goals should dictate the form of the in-service (length of time, materials, presenter and setting)" (p. 1). She further suggested that the critical factors of successful in-service were valid needs identification; goal-appropriate in-service model; participant involvement in initiating, planning and conducting the activities; emphasized participant responsibility and linkage of related agencies.

Social, Political and Economic Factors. Decreased entry into the teaching profession due to financial constraints and societal priorities has limited the infusion of theories and techniques normally introduced by newly-trained practitioners. Decreased professional entry discounts the effect of pre-service programs on practice. Inflation, declining school enrolment and decrease in teacher mobility are encouraging teachers to teach longer. The resulting effect is that the average teacher's age is increasing and the time since last formal coursework is greater (Taylor, Hunt, Sheppy and Stronck, 1983). The time factor has widened the natural gap between current practice and theory.

another's uniqueness, power, limits of authority, responsibilities and points-of-view (Johnson, 1975). Collaborative relationships must be based on a foundation of mutual trust; understanding and sensitivity of the individual agencies' organization, philosophy, history, authority and responsibility; early active involvement; and willingness to share. Time spent developing appropriate attitudes, skills and functional interaction of the participants will increase the effectiveness of collaborative committees (Lippitt, Edmundson, Cowing and Lippitt, 1975).

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

The following examples describe the purpose which stimulated the collaboration, the participating agencies, their interactions and the functions of the multi-agency committee. Furthermore, the examples illustrate how the five critical factors of the conceptual framework were operationalized.

Tri-University Committee

The British Columbia universities realized the need to cooperatively plan off-campus continuing education for teachers. The Tri-University Committee was originally founded on the informal liaison between the extension education personnel at the Universities of British Columbia, Simon Fraser and Victoria. The purpose of the Tri-University Committee was to promote collaboration between faculties to equalize the opportunity of all teachers to continue their education. Figure 1 illustrates the structure of the working committee.

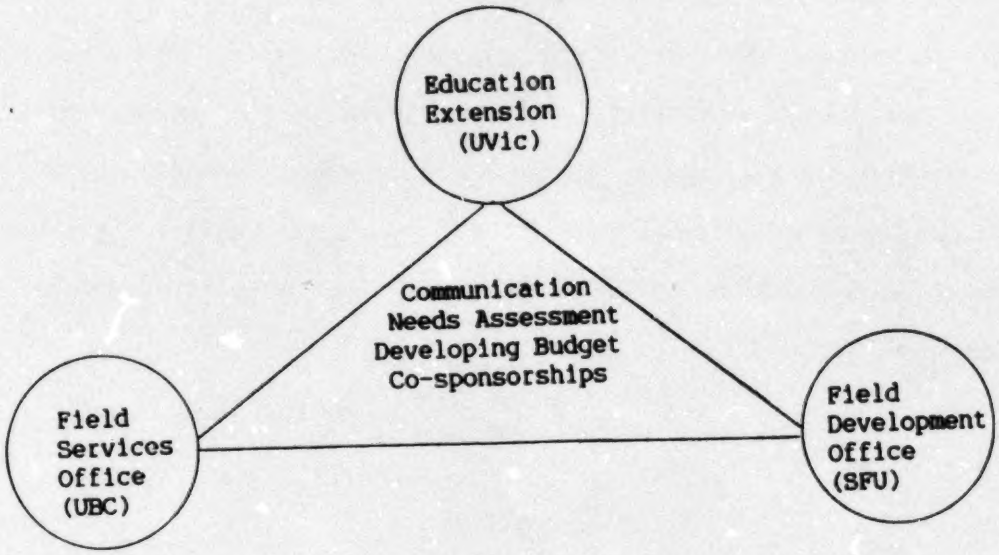

Figure 1: Tri-University Planning Committee.

The Committee meets regularly to discuss, analyze and examine common strategies to develop programs, avoid duplication, provide the widest range of continuing education throughout the province and project future programs requirements. The universities are equal partners in this model with no one institution playing a dominant role. Several programs have been co-sponsored by the universities as a result of the work of this committee, such as summer institutes, teleconferences and credit courses.

The model functions successfully because of the mutual respect of the participants and their willingness to share resources. Historical differences in the structure of each institution have not inhibited the committee's efforts. The Tri-University Committee has provided coordination of course offerings and a sound working foundation for other multi-agency committees.

East Kootenay Planning Committee

The East Kootenay Planning Committee consists of members from six school districts who meet on a regular basis to discuss common concerns. Annually the Tri-University Committee has been invited to participate in discussions to improve communication, assess needs, provide general course counselling, avoid duplication and share resources. Furthermore, the school district members serve as informal agents for the universities in their committees.

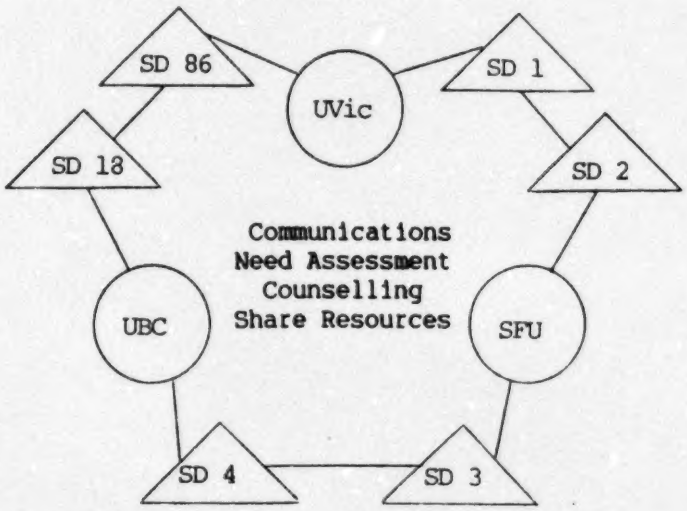

Figure 2: East Kootenay Planning Committee.

The East Kootenay planning model illustrates the grafting of one multi-agency planning committee to another for a specific purpose. The parent group has a clear set of objectives which has stimulated the development of a strong working relationship. The periodic incorporation of the Tri-University Committee maximizes the efficiency of organization. The regional nature of the committee's composition has encouraged regional activities and interdistrict programs otherwise not possible.

Okanagan Professional Development Committee

The Okanagan Professional Development Committee was initially formed at the request of the three British Columbia universities to facilitate communication, avoid duplication, share resources and develop long-range planning for continuing professional education for the area. The committee is composed of ten school districts in the Okanagan region, the three British Columbia universities, Open Learning Institute, Okanagan College and Gonzaga University (Pullman, Washington).

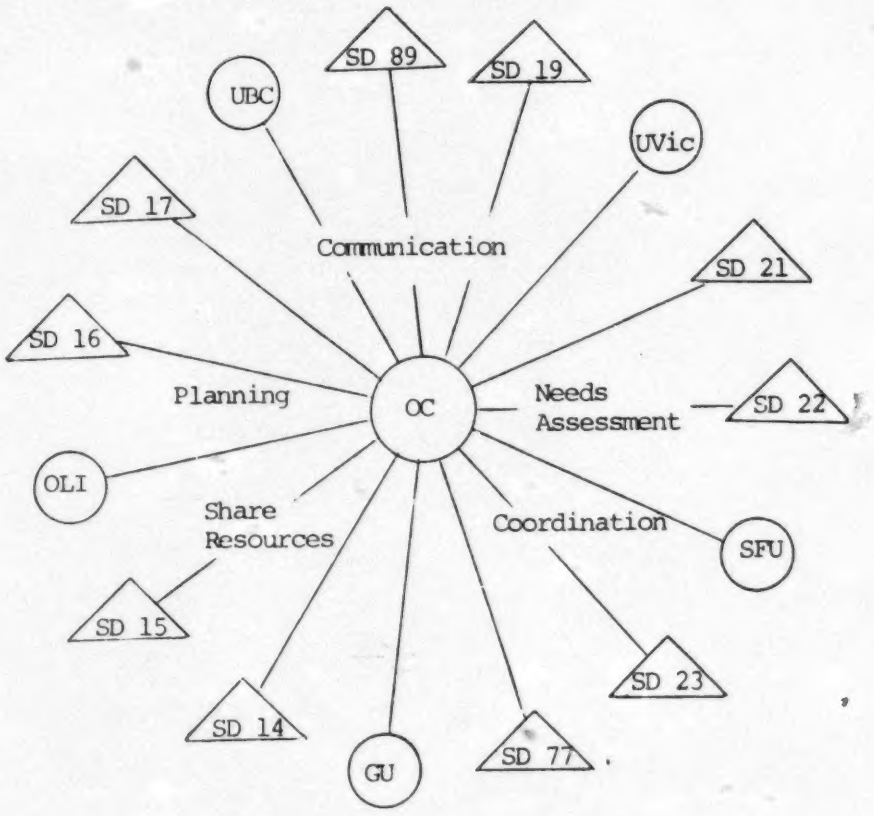

Figure 3: Okanagan Professional Development Committee.

The committee, although operating for three years, has never functioned successfully. The lack of clear-cut goals and lack of understanding of local politics rendered the organization ineffective. Conceived as a body in which there would be equal authority for decision making, it became apparent that the committee was too large and the perceived power of any working subcommittee violated the established order.

Cowichan Valley Planning Committee

The Cowichan Valley Planning Committee has as its main focus the sharing of information to coordinate post-secondary education experience for residents of the Cowichan Valley. The Committee includes: Malaspina College, Open Learning Institute, Knowledge Network of the West, University of Victoria, Canada Manpower and School Districts 65 and 66.

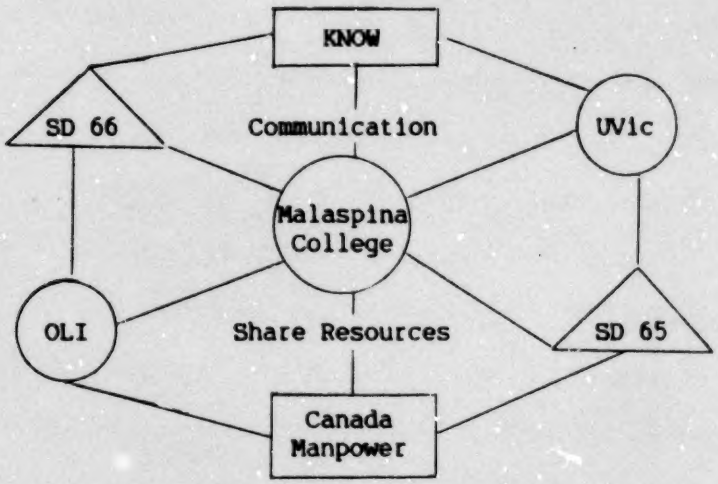

Figure 4: Cowichan Valley Planning Committee.

The leadership of the committee is provided by Malaspina College. The committee assumes little authority or power for decision making; rather it exists to facilitate information exchange, avoid duplication, assess needs and clarify goals and roles.

The success of the Cowichan Valley Planning Committee is based on a well-defined purpose. The cordial supportive leadership and mutual respect of the members have stimulated the continuation of the committee.

Professional Studies Committee

Numerous teacher renewal programs have been developed by professional agencies outside the traditional academic community. Many of these programs have been judged worthwhile by the Ministry of Education, local school districts and the profession. Among the programs designed for practicing classroom teachers are:

1. Teaching Effectiveness and Classroom Handling (TEACH),
2. Professional Refinements in Developing Effectiveness (PRIDE).

Projects TEACH and PRIDE were originally proposed by the Professional Development Office of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF). Although TEACH and PRIDE have been endorsed by the Ministry, the profession and local school districts, no academic credit was associated with the program. It was suggested that a multi-agency committee composed of the BCTF, the Professional Studies Department and Education Extension Office of the University of Victoria collaboratively develop academic and administrative procedures and deliver province-wide credit and non-credit teacher renewal activities. The concern became one of how academic credit could be assigned to externally-developed programs or how the programs might be modified to

financial resources. The multi-agency planning provided a valuable continuing professional education activity for teachers and solidified a working relationship between the participating agencies and individuals.

A University, Provincial Specialist Association and Local Teacher Association Planning Committee

In several instances specialists associations have initiated multi-agency planning committees directed at a variety of goals, such as organizing programs, evaluating conferences and staffing workshops. The need for computer literacy and classroom application stimulated the Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association (PITA) to form an alliance with local teacher associations and the University of Victoria to develop and deliver a series of workshops. Figure 6 illustrates the structure, roles, responsibilities and function of the participants.

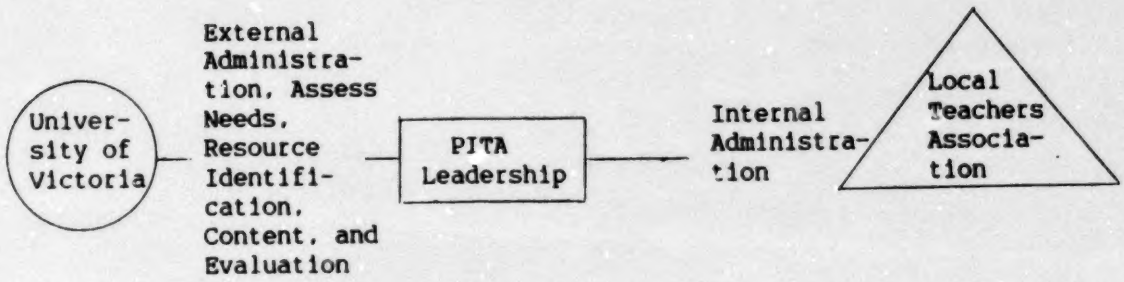

Figure 6: A University, Provincial Specialist Association and Local Teacher Association Planning Committee.

achieve such recognition. Negotiations between the three partners developed mutually-acceptable academic guidelines, instructor approval procedures, academic coordination and funding arrangements.

Figure 5 illustrates the mutual roles and responsibilities of the three partners involved in the credit activities. The non-credit components of TEACH and PRIDE were retained by BCTF.

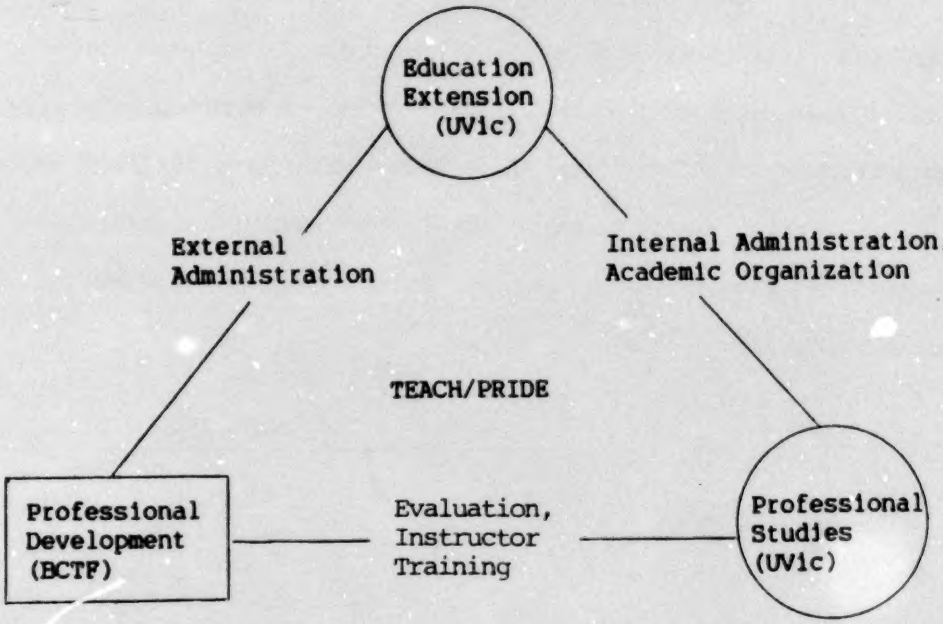

Figure 5: Professional Studies Committee.

The Professional Studies Committee worked because the agencies shared decision making and authority. The importance of a mutually-valued problem helped clarify goals, identify roles, shared human expertise and locate

The distribution of practitioners with common need and limited resources were the critical factors governing the development of this collaborative approach. The committee assessed need, inventoried available resources and shared decisions regarding planning, organization and delivery. PITA assumed the leadership role because of its link between the other participating agencies. Evaluation was conducted by PITA and Education Extension to assess effectiveness and provide data for future programs. The effectiveness of this model is dependent upon flexibility, which enables it to adapt to the local needs and the leadership of the specialist association.

An Interprovincial Allied Agency Planning Committee

Mutual needs of related professions which have limited formal communication and contact is becoming a common concern. The adult education specialist possesses the organizational, management and knowledge expertise to unify these diverse agencies to solve mutual problems. The isolation of some communities and territories complicates the facilitation and may require the university to take a less physical presence in the planning while maintaining consultative input. An example of such a situation is the Yukon Association for Special Needs People. The collaborative model of the association, special interest groups and the University of Victoria attempted to identify common needs, share human resources and local funds. Early involvement in the planning stages encouraged commitment to the program, more realistic needs assessment, avoidance of duplication of effort and a clarification of the goals and roles. Figure 7 illustrates the participants, communications and responsibilities.

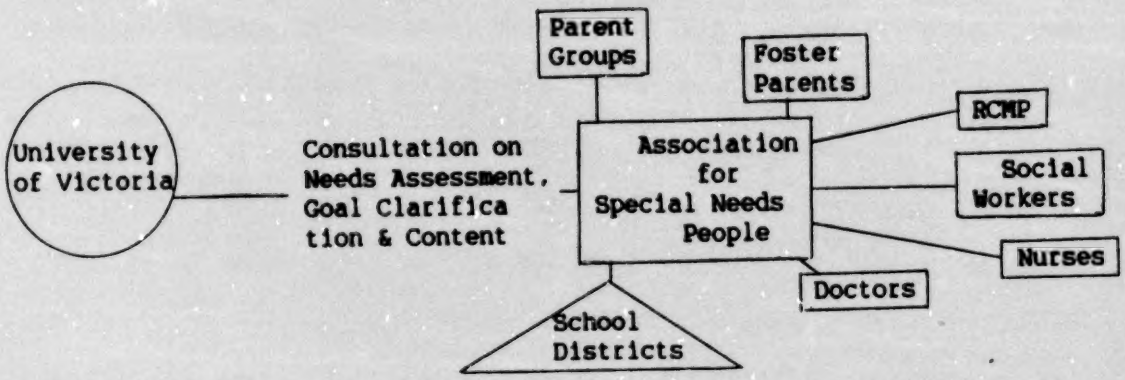

Figure 7: An Interprovincial Allied Agency Planning Committee.

The Yukon Association for Special Needs People recognized the need for in-service programs for a variety of agencies working with special needs people, such as doctors, nurses, parents, foster parents, social workers and policemen. The lack of funds and resources to develop diverse programs stimulated the formation of a local multi-agency planning committee. Participating agencies pooled their problems and resources and requested the University of Victoria to assume a consultative role. Responsibility for some aspects were assumed by single agencies with the content of the program mutually developed by all agencies. Organization, resource identification, administration and evaluation of the project were shared by the Association and the University of Victoria.

The evaluation indicated that the experience was positive and that presentation to a heterogeneous audience could have provided participants with more interaction and opportunities to establish a lasting network and solve mutual problems. Without a collaborative approach, no single agency could have

assessed the needs or organized the publicity, administration and schedules. The interprovincial model functioned effectively because of the leadership, mutual identification of needs, sharing of resources and coordination of activities. The result, a valuable experience for all professions, motivated the development of an on-going, working committee that shares the responsibility for continuing professional education.

SUMMARY

An analysis of the practical examples confirmed that the initiating stimuli were communication, needs assessment, avoidance of duplication, clarification of goal/roles, resources and evaluation. Few committees will be actively involved in all six areas. Clearly-defined; attainable purposes and successful results; organization and participant willingness, openness and sensitivity; value assigned participating agency contribution and shared power are the critical characteristics for success and prolonged involvement. Knox (1982) likewise pointed out that clarity of purpose is directly related to worthwhile results which in turn generates member satisfaction.

The agency and participant characteristics, perceived value of contribution and shared power are interdependent. Organization support and participants who respect one another's needs normally confront problems on an unified issues basis and not on a personality level. Such organizations and participants value the consortium of human talents and material resources brought to a problem situation. Entry into the client group (teacher organization and schools) is equally important as knowledge expertise (university) and financial resources (Ministry of Education) when planning, organizing and deliver-

ing teacher in-service programs. The recognized value of these contributions will avoid the shortcoming of "money is power". Organizations and participants that seek power shortcircuit multi-agency planning.

Inspection of the case studies illustrates that no one model fits all problem situations. The membership, leadership, distribution and history may influence the specific structure used. Knox (1982) outlined five motives which encourage multi-agency involvement: interest in serving clients, development of smooth procedures, creating a favorable institutional image, achieving institutional change or solving social problems. Any or all of these motives are worthwile reasons, but regardless of the motive, multi-agency planning consortia bring together the critical resources to solve problems. Furthermore, the perceived credibility of the consortium is greater than that of any individual member.

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